

that whatever the man was personally, he has not stamped his egotism and vanity on this the best of all biographies. We have not only a picture but a photograph of the man and the times in which he lived. We have a history of the eighteenth century showing us very minutely the "life of man," how they talked, lived, acted, bought, sold, traded and a thousand other things that we like to know about. The great doctor and his friend are living realities. We know how he ate his dinner, with flushed face and veins swollen on his broad forehead. We know that he puffed, and grunted, and contradicted everybody, reviling as fools and barren rascals and blockheads all who dared to differ from his literary highness. We are familiar with his daily life, his fondness for hoarding up orange peeling, his swaggering gait along the street touching all the posts, his St. Vitus's dance, his scrofula, his enormous tea-drinking, his keen appetite for fish sauce and veal pie, the queer people he kept about him, blind old Mrs. Williams, who, in pouring out tea, put her finger in it to see that the cup was full, the cat called "Hodge," and the negro Frank. Everything and everybody about the great burly doctor are as real as life. We see them and know them as if we had lived with them. Whatever may be said about Boswell he had one grand idea, and that was the most unbounded admiration for Johnson, and he has bequeathed to us his life and times in a manner that cannot be excelled or even imitated.

Any account of our veteran *littérateur* would be manifestly incomplete without a reference to that distinguished literary club founded in 1763, of which he was *par excellence, facile princeps*. It included the names of some of England's most distinguished men. There was Sir Joshua Reynolds, the acknowledged head of the English school of painting, and a gentleman of high literary tastes. There was the well-known and strangely erratic Oliver Goldsmith, thought by some to be *non compos mentis*; —Horace Walpole said he was "an inspired idiot"—blundering, impulsive, vain and extravagant, clumsy in manner and undignified in presence, and always up to his ears in debt, for which he was several times in prison; of undoubted genius, a poet and novelist. The great statesman, Edmund Burke, was another member of this celebrated club; a college companion of Goldsmith's. Garrick the actor was another. These were some of